(d) if so, the reasons for this poor response and how this trend is proposed to be reversed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) (a) to (c) Government has permitted private players to set up FM stations. Tenders were invited in respect of 40 cities for 108 channels in October, 1999. On the basis of the auction held in March 2000, 29 companies were selected for allocation of 101 channels in 40 cities. 16 Companies had submitted Bank Guarantee equivalent to first year's licence fee and signed the licence agreement for 37 channels in 19 cities. Till date 16 channels have been operationalised. 6 channels in Chennai and Kolkata are expected to be operationalised shortly. One company has paid licence fees for 2 channels in Jabalpur and Bhubaneswar, which were granted "Deemed operationalised station" status.

(d) The successful applicants/licencees have withdrawn at various stages on account of their own commercial considerations.

Expansion of transmission network in Uttaranchal

4587. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the development and expansion of transmission network in the State of Uttaranchal for the current and next year; and

(b) the amount proposed to be spent for this work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PARSAD):

(a) and (b) Two very low power transmitters of Doordarshan at Dewal and Fata are targeted to be commissioned in Uttaranchal during 2003-04. Capital cost of the above two project is Rs. 160.65 lakhs. In addition to the above, uncovered areas in the state are also proposed to be covered with a multi channel bouquet through satellite transmission in Ku-band during the Tenth Five Year Plan. In sofar as All India Radio is concerned, following projects are envisaged as part of the 10th plan.

1. 10 KW FM Tr. with type II studio, Play back Receiving facility and Staff Quarters at Dehradun.

2. FM Transmitter with Receiving, play back and Voice over recording/ dubbing, field production facility and staff quarters at

(i) Haldwani/Kaladungi-10KW

(ii) Bhatwari-5KW

(iii) Bageshwar-5 KW

3. Relay Station with 1 KW FM transmitter, Receiving facility and Staff quarter at

(i) Champawat

(ii) Garison

(iii) Rudraprayag

(iv) New Tehri

4. 1 KW MW Transmitter with Receiving, play back and Voice over Recording/Dubbing, field production facility and staff quarters at Dharchula. However, year-wise targets have not been fixed. Total allocation for these 10th Plan Projects for state of Uttaranchal is Rs. 3245 lakhs.

Coverage of AIR programmes in the country

†4588. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total population which is still deprived of the AIR programmes in the country alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(b) the justification of the wastage of crores of rupees in the name of celebrating Platinum Jubilee by AIR instead of increasing its broadcast network and its benefit to the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) : (a) The present radio coverage by AIR through MW and FM Transmitters is 99.13% by population. Therefore the percentage of deprived population is only 0.87%. In addition to MW and FM Service, AIR also broadcasts through SW Transmitters which are mostly support services of MW channel. Besides, AIR also has Satellite Digital Radio Service. 100% of the country by area and population is covered by AIR, if SW and Satellite System Service is taken into account.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.